

Historic Preservation Commission Meeting

12/1/2014

Members present: Ward Bucher, Dorothy Fenwick, Marsha Kacher, Ron Mitchell

Staff present: Martin Sokolich, Jeremy Rothwell and Daniel Brandewie.

Meeting to order at 3:05PM.

The meeting minutes from the previous meeting were not available.

Historic Assessment The matching grant request for \$2,000 the Stories of the Chesapeake was not awarded. Martin explained the reasons as to why the application was denied, which focused primarily on not having a tourism component.

Membership Mr. Bucher recommended Paul Schumacher, who owns a number of historic properties in Easton, apply for one of the open positions on the Commission.

Procedures for Compliance with Historic District Regulations Martin explained that he spoke with Bob Graham, Chief Code Compliance Officer, about the repair work at Jena, and recommended in the future that the Commission completely document any violations. Mr. Graham did conduct a site visit, but he was not familiar with the standards of work that the owner was expected to abide. It would have been better if one of the commission members had accompanied him on the site visit.

In addition, Mr. Graham relayed that revisions are likely required to the County Code to clear up what role the Code Compliance has in enforcing the terms set forth by the Commission.

The chair requested that he be notified whenever the county code enforcement officer will be conducting a site visit so that they can make arrangements to attend. Mr. Mitchell expressed frustration with the lack of communication between Permits staff and the Historic Preservation Commission.

Martin suggested that the Commission make recommendations to the County Council for specific revisions to the county code. The Commission could write up a series of general bullet points that the County Attorney could review and translate into revisions to the Code.

Daniel suggested that the Commission make revisions based upon the model zoning ordinance drafted by MHT. The chair noted that the designation of historic preservation districts is strictly voluntary.

Comprehensive Plan Mr. Bucher noted that he met with the Planning Commission about additional Historic Preservation goals in the draft comprehensive plan. Martin noted that most of the goals in the draft were carried over from the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. A motion was made by Mr. Mitchell for the draft Comprehensive Plan update to include a clear and precise statement of policy for the County Historic Preservation Commission to have authority to designate and enforce the terms of the Historic Districts, using best-practice zoning language developed by the state. Staff will compare the language from other counties and local governments and recommend revisions to the historic

preservation chapter of the draft plan. Discussion ensued. The policy statement was approved by unanimous consent by all four board members.

Commission Development Mr. Mitchell recommended that staff research and speak with other jurisdictions in the state as to what incentives are offered to property owners. He made a motion for an action item for the County to investigate and implement an incentive program for property owners. The Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the action item.

Site Visits Pleasant Valley and Wakefield are both coming up for biennial inspection. Pleasant Valley will be inspected on Monday, December 15th. Wakefield will be scheduled during February.

Two board members will not be present for the January meeting, the January meeting was postponed, the next scheduled meeting will be February 2, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm.